



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

FORMALITY AND INFORMALITY

FRANCES LESTER WARNER
Newton High School, Newtonville, Mass.

Abigail was thinking about her teaching. Every morning for two months she had looked blithely upon three sturdy rows of little Freshman boys. She knew she had made them interested—melodramatic even. She had played with them the brisk game of mental cross-tag, which enlivens every boy's recitation, and she had grown amazingly nimble at it. Inexorably and rigidly she had demanded that the class should know several things exactly; with all her wits she had devised ways of making them feel some beauties and understand some faults; enthusiastically she had rattled the dry bones of her subject until she was not sure that there were any dry bones at all. But just now Abigail was seeing pictures of her class in its natural state, racing down the driveway after school, neckties flapping, bookstraps streaming in their rear, merrily all. What had literature and rhetoric to do with them? Next she pictured them sitting before her in orderly wise, well-dressed, independent, remote. Abigail felt suddenly artificial. Where had their souls been all this time—hers and the boys'? When were they to begin to grow real? "Is it their correctness," wondered Abigail, "or their collectiveness?"

The thought was persistent. Abigail remembered the Sunday afternoons when she had sat with the little boy cousins on the rocks above the trout-spring. There had been the same stories, the same teaching, the same Abigail. Yet there had been a vitality in the very feeling of it when the little gray sweaters and the questioning eyes had gathered around her; and there had been no change in "atmosphere" when they all climbed down the columbine rocks and went through the lane to find the shad-bush flowers. Could it be that Norfolk jackets, a classroom bell, and a multiplication of numbers made the difference?

"How, for instance," thought Abigail, "would I teach the fifth canto of *Marmion* to an incorrect, uncollective fourth scientific?" Abigail envied Mrs. Nutter, Mrs. Moor, Mrs. Sheridan, and all the mothers of her small Pilgrim Fathers. Given Nutter in pajamas—subdued, sleepy, ready for dreams!—Abigail sighed as she imagined how grimly then the Palmer would find his way through "mountain, moss, and moor," how vivid would appear the warriors "moving athwart the evening sky," and how the story would pause for a little to hear the owlet flap his wing. Surely the fourth scientific in pajamas would want to hear the singing of the queer little tune that belongs with "Oh young Lochinvar is come out of the west." After that sort of teaching, *Marmion* and memory could hardly become separate.

"Still," thought Abigail sleepily, "they *will* wear Norfolk jackets to school."

Thoughtfully she dipped her russet-tipped pen in her red-ink bottle and wrote busily on the back of Nutter's latest theme: "Rewrite, correcting all mistakes in spelling and arrangement, and develop the last paragraph so as to secure proper emphasis for your main idea."